MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

19 MAY 1981

Lebanese Crisis

Military Situation--Damascus radio reported this morning that Israel has moved troops northward from the Jordan Valley toward its borders with Syria and Lebanon. The radio also cited other reports that Israeli troops have been moved to the north from the Sinai and southern Israel. According to the Israeli newspaper HA'ARETZ, Saudi Arabia has placed its army units in the Tabuk area, near the Saudi-Jordanian border, on alert as a signal that it would support Syria if Israel started a war. In Lebanon artillery exchanges between eastern and western Beirut continued throughout the afternoon and evening of 18 May, Beirut radio reported. The shelling eased later, the radio said, and the capital was calm early this morning. The radio reported that 29 people were killed and 142 injured in the day's shelling. Voice of Lebanon radio said shells also hit Christian-held coastal areas north of Beirut, including Juniyah. Clandestine Voice of Palestine radio accused the Phalangists and their Lebanese Army allies of having resumed the shelling and said they were using phosporous incendiary bombs, causing heavy casualties. An official Palestinian statement, broadcast by the radio, said the Palestinians in and around western Beirut will not return this fire. The radio also reported more Israeli shelling and overflights in the south.

Warships Near Lebanon--Voice of Lebanon reported the presence of eight warships off the Lebanese coast during the afternoon and said one ship was sailing toward Sidon. Jerusalem radio said the Soviet flotilla continued to cruise in the eastern Mediterranean, between Cyprus and the Syrian coast, while AFP reported that a French flotilla, including the aircraft carrier Clemenceau, is also in the area.

Habib Mission--Damascus television tersely reported U.S. Special Envoy Philip Habib's arrival in Damascus from Riyadh. According to AFP, the Damascus daily AL-BA'TH reported that Syria has rejected the proposals made by Habib but wants to know U.S. intentions without necessarily giving its approval to the solutions proposed. In a report on Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Junblatt's interview with the Lebanese weekly MONDAY MORNING, Voice of Palestine radio noted that the National Movement has rejected Habib's proposal of sending the Lebanese Army to the Zahlah and Sannin heights. The radio quoted Junblatt as saying that the United States thinks the situation in the Sannin heights has upset the balance. According to Junblatt, Habib's role as negotiator rather than mediator has been confirmed by the specific and definite conditions he attaches to certain subjects and his insistence on limiting the talks to the situation in Zahlah and the surrounding heights.

Support for Syria--Damascus radio reported that Prime Minister Dr 'Abd ar-Ra'uf al-Kasm told the Syrian Cabinet, meeting on 18 May, that Syria has the support of the Arab masses and the communist countries, particularly the Soviet Union, in its confrontation with Israel er Lebanon. According to Damascus radio reports, Syria has received expressions of support from Qatar, the UAE, Morocco and Tunisia. Damascus television also reported that in a meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, Iranian Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Hashemi-Rafsanjani declared Iran's support for Syria's stand.

Arab Foreign Ministers Meeting--QNA reported that the Arab League General Secretariat has scheduled an emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers on 22 May to examine the situation in the Middle East.

Begin Remarks--According to IDF radio, Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin told correspondents after a meeting of the Knesset's Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee that Saudi Arabia is incapable of playing any useful role in moderating Syria's stance on the Lebanese missile crisis and is one of the most corrupt states in the world. A radio correspondent cited Begin as saying that Saudi Arabia is weak and may collapse any day. He said he cannot understand how one can treat Saudi Arabia as a moderate element when it has declared a holy war against Israel.

Saudi Arabia

Support for Lebanon--According to Riyadh radio, Crown Prince Fahd Ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz explained the situation in the Arab world to the Council of Ministers and stressed that Saudi Arabia condemns any Israeli aggression that encroaches upon the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon and supports the legitimate authority in Lebanon.

Base Talks Denied--In an interview with AL-JAZIRAH, cited by SPA, Defense Minister Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz denied that Saudi Arabia has discussed granting the United States military facilities or bases. According to SPA, the minister also asserted that the United States would proceed with its commitments to meet the kingdom's military needs.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

According to INA, the Iranian military force that attempted to attack the Iraqi forces besieging Abadan has been defeated. Baghdad radio reported the Iraqi Armed Forces are continuing to pound Abadan with heavy weapons, while INA claimed that Iraqi ground forces shot down two Iranian Phantoms and three helicopters. Tehran radio, meanwhile, maintained that the Abadan battle is continuing. In a commentary on the inaccuracy of Iranian military reports, Baghdad radio's Azeri service said Iraq's military communiques are noted for their careful reportage of developments, while the Iranian General Staff communiques are meant to mislead the public and are devoid of truth. The radio said Iraqi troops have occupied more Iranian territory following recent clashes in Sar-e Pol-e Zahab; and it claimed that Iranian President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr has lied about the true extent of Iranian losses.

Kurdish Affairs

The clandestine Voice of Iranian Kordestan radio reported an 11 May attack by Kurdish Democratic Party peshmerga against the Urumiyeh garrison. According to the radio, considerable damage was inflicted, but the number of dead and injured is unknown. According to the clandestine Free Voice of Iran radio, Kurdish combatants thwarted an attack by revolution guards on the Uramanat Heights. The radio said the Kurds are intensifying their attack in light of the indifference exhibited by the Khomeyni regime to their proposal for talks. The clandestine Radio Iran reported on a clash in Kordestan between Kurdish peshmerga and Khomeyni guards in which three "Afghan mercenaries" were slain. According to the clandestine Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan, the Iraqi Democratic National Front committee in Mosul and Dahuk recently met and decided to escalate armed and political struggle against the Saddam Husayn regime. The committee includes Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party and Communist Party members, the radio said.

Iran

In an interview published in the 15 May Paris daily LE MATIN, Iranian President Bani-Sadr admitted that there is no longer any law in Iran and that people are arrested and tortured as they were under previous regimes. He also said that the United States is doing all it can to prevent the purchase of Iranian oil. Questioned on the strength of the Tudeh Party, Bani-Sadr said it has lost the popular support it enjoyed before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

FBIS DAILY REPORT

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FOREIGN OFFICE: ACTION PROMPT ON ISLAND DISPUTE

BK181730 Dacca Domestic Service in English 1705 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman in Dacca today said the government did not lose any time at any stage in taking prompt action about Indian military moves in South Talpatti Island and in informing the people of the matter after receiving the Indian response. He was commenting on the view expressed in certain quarters as to why it took the government 1 week to inform the people of the Indian action in South Talpatti.

The spokesman said the Bangladesh Navy boat on a routine patrol in Bangladesh waters first sighted the Indian Navy ship in the vicinity of the South Talpatti Island on the afternoon of the 9th of this month. After having satisfied themselves about the objectionable activities of the Indian ship, the Bangladesh Navy advised the government of this matter on the 10th of this month. The Bangladesh Government decided after careful study of the report to take diplomatic action and lodged a strong protest in writing both in Dacca and New Delhi on the 11th against such an unwarranted, unilateral and illegal action by the Indian Government in violation of the agreement reached between the two governments for a peaceful solution of the problem.

According to normal diplomatic practice, Bangladesh waited for the Indian reply. The Government of India delivered a reply on Friday, the 15th of this month, to the Bangladesh deputy high commissioner in New Delhi, although the reply was dated the 13th. On Saturday, the 16th, the Government of Bangladesh lodged another strong protest refuting the unfounded Indian allegations and requesting the Government of India once again to withdraw all Indian naval ships from Bangladesh waters and to remove all men and material forthwith from the island. It also urged to desist from such unilateral and provocative actions in future and to seek a solution of the problem through peaceful and friendly negotiations to which India stands fully committed.

Simultaneously, press statements were also released stating the factual position. It is quite clear, the spokesman added, that the government did not lose any time at any stage in taking prompt action in the matter.

COUNTRY OBSERVES FARAKKA RESISTANCE DAY 16 MAY

BK170729 Dacca Overseas Service in English 0445 GMT 17 May 81

[Text] The Farakka Resistance Day was observed yesterday by a number of political parties and other organizations in the country with a call to foil the Indian plan of turning eight northern districts of Bangladesh into desert. On the day 5 years ago, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani had led a long march to protest India's unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water through Farakka barrage. Observing the day through a symbolic march from Sibganj to Kansat in Rajshahi and public meetings and seminars in Dacca and other parts of the country, they renewed their faith in the ideals of late Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani in upholding the rights of the people and frustrating anti-Bangladesh activities. At the border township of Kansat, thousands of people attended a public meeting at the end of a big process march, a 6-mile route from Sibganj, to register their rightful share of the common river. In Dacca, the committee for resistance against Farakka and border attacks held a public meeting at Baitul Mukkaram in the afternoon while Bhashani's Samrati Sangsad held a discussion meeting.

INDIAN COMMUNICATION MINISTER ARRIVES 18 MAY

BK181630 Dacca Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] Indian Communication Minister C. M. Stephen arrived in Dacca this afternoon on a 2-day visit to Bangladesh.

ANTI-INDIAN CAMPAIGN BY BANGLADESH PROTESTED

BK181636 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] A PTI report from Dacca says that Indian High Commissioner Dubey today forwarded a note to the Bangladesh Foreign Office on the stepped-up anti-India tirade in the press over the latest naval boat incident. In the note, Dubey is understood to have pointed out that sustained campaign against India in the Bangladesh media is arousing feelings against her friendly neighbor.

PDRY LEADER, GANDHI HOLD TALKS IN DELHI 18 MAY

BK181652 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, who arrived in New Delhi this morning, had a 75-minute meeting with Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi. They reviewed the situation in the region and the possibilities of further expanding bilateral relations. Mrs Gandhi told 'Ali Nasir Muhammad that the problems of the region have to be resolved by the countries of the area themselves without outside interference. India, she said, is keen to have peaceful and friendly relations with all its neighbors and has been making efforts to that end. About the induction of sophisticated arms into Pakistan, Mrs Gandhi told the Yemeni leader that this brings big power confrontation to our doorstep. While Pakistan has every right to acquire arms for its defense, it is the context and the perspective in which it is getting military equipment that has caused concern to India. She also briefed him about the latest developments in the efforts by the nonaligned nations to bring an end to the Iran-Iraq conflict.

The Yemeni leader told Mrs Gandhi about the growing tensions in west Asia, including the Gulf region, the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean. He referred to the British and the U.S. military presence in the region and said foreign military bases should be liquidated and there should be no outside interference in the Indian Ocean region. In the economic field, the Yemeni president expressed his appreciation for India's cooperation in his country's 5-year plan. In this connection, he particularly mentioned the 170-million rupee (Ar-Rayan) airport project in his country which is being executed with Indian cooperation.

The visiting dignitary is accompanied by his ministers for foreign affairs, home and health. A cultural exchange program and an agreement on technical and economic cooperation are likely to be signed during his stay in India.

[Aden Domestic Service in Arabic at 1230 GMT on 18 May notes that in his arrival statement in New Delhi on 18 May, the PDRY leader "expressed pleasure at his visit to the friendly Republic of India at the invitation of President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He said the visit would provide him and his delegation with an auspicious opportunity to discuss future cooperation with the friendly Indian leaders and also issues affecting peace and security in the Indian Ocean and the rest of the region." The report also quotes the PDRY leader as saying: "We in Democratic Yemen highly value India's international position, its role in maintaining peace, and the political course it has pursued to assure stability in the Indian subcontinent. Democratic Yemen also highly values India's support for our people's struggle to secure national sovereignty and to achieve independent political development." The report goes on to note that the PDRY leader "hailed India's support for the struggle of our Arab peoples, particularly the struggle of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, to exercise their right to self-determination and to build an independent state under the PLO's leadership. He said that during his visit there would be talks on ways of maintaining bilateral efforts as well as those within the context of the Nonaligned Movement to uphold the people's rights to political and social progress and to consolidate international detente and peace."]

Banquet Speeches

BK190719 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 May 81

[Text] President Sanjiva Reddy and visiting President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen 'Ali Nasir Muhammad have stressed the urgency of continuing efforts for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. Speaking at a banquet hosted in honor of the visiting dignitary, President Reddy said tensions have been built up in the Indian Ocean zone which pose a threat to peace and stability in the region. He said: All our efforts should be directed toward speedy implementation of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. Reddy said: At this critical juncture of increasing interference by outside powers in our region, it becomes all the more urgent for the nonaligned countries to work together to meet the exigencies of the situation. Reiterating India's support for the Arab cause, Reddy said India has all along articulated her strong opposition to Israel's expansionism and lent her full support to the just struggle of the Palestinian people to regain their inalienable rights, including the right to a homeland. He said a just and lasting peace in west Asia will only be possible with full participation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the peace talks. Referring to Indo-Arab friendship, Reddy said: Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi's recent visit to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates testified to India's commitment to the cause of the Arabs.

In his reply, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad reaffirmed his country's support to India's call for turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and for cooperation among the littoral and hinterland states. He said his country welcomes the idea of an international conference on the Indian Ocean. Speaking on Afghanistan, the visiting dignitary said his country respects the will of the Afghan people. 'Ali Nasir Muhammad welcomed the efforts being made by India in stabilizing the situation and in promoting good neighborliness amongst the countries of the region. On west Asia, Muhammad said a complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from occupied Arab territories is essential in bringing about peace in the region.

KARACHI PAPER CITES INDIAN PRESS ON KHALISTAN

GF161110 Karachi JANG in Urdu 15 May 81 p 3

[From the foreign press review]

[Excerpts] ENQELAB of Bombay reports that a member of the Akali Dal (Talwandi group) in Delhi has been presenting daily arrests to the Parliament in support of Khalistan. On the other hand, according to a report in the TRIBUNE, Sant Harchand Singh Langural claims that the Sikhs are a separate entity and therefore the demand for Khalistan should be accepted. The HINDUSTAN TIMES denies this in its editorial, and propaganda against this movement has begun on government instructions. That is why the HIND SAMACHAR published a statement by the president of the Janata Party which says that his party does not consider the Sikhs an independent nation.

According to THE TIMES OF INDIA, participants in a recent convention in Chandigarm opposed the Khalistan and Achunistan movements. The leader of Deccan says exactly the same thing about the Khalistan and Muslim land movements. A Sikh leader, Sukhinder Singh, has demanded that Sikhs be granted special status in India. This was later printed in CHANDIGARH TRIBUNE.

On the other hand, tension is increasing in the provincial feuds in the northern region. The Gurkha National Liberation Front in Darjeeling has issued an ultimatum to the government that Gurkhaland be declared independent in 6 months or the consequences must be borne. The rebels of Nagaland and Manipur are going to make the same kind of trouble.

SPOKESMAN CLARIFIES REMARKS TO NEW YORK TIMES

GF181553 Karachi DAWN in English 17 May 81 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, 16 May-- A spokesman of the Foreign Office here today clarified certain remarks of a senior Pakistan Foreign Office official carried by an American paper recently.

The spokesman made the following statement:

The New York TIMES of May 12 has published a despatch from its correspondent in New Delhi who visited Pakistan recently. The despatch attributes certain remarks to a senior official of the Foreign Office. Some of these remarks need to be clarified as they are misleading.

The Pakistani official has been quoted as saying that the 5-year program of American economic assistance and military sales was acceptable to Pakistan. To say the least, this is highly premature. The fact is that discussions between the U.S. and Pakistan Governments, initiated during Foreign Minister Agha Shahi's visit to Washington last month, are still continuing.

The two sides were able to agree on the principles which would govern a new bilateral relationship between the two countries on the basis of sovereign equality and respect for Pakistan's policy of nonalignment and its commitments to the positions taken by the Islamic conference. Further discussions will be taking place on the terms of economic assistance and purchase of defense equipment from the United States.

Since it is in the interest of peace and stability in the region and world peace that Pakistan should be able to strengthen its independence and role as a nonaligned country, the question of Pakistan entering into any strategic regional consensus or granting base facilities in return for sale of military equipment by the U.S. does not arise.

FOREIGN OFFICE: INDIA DENIES PAKISTANI ARMS REPORT

BK181630 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad said today that the local administration of the Indian town of Rampur had rejected a report published in the STATESMAN, an Indian daily, to the effect that Pakistani arms and ammunition had been discovered in Rampur. According to information received through the Pakistani mission in New Delhi, the district magistrate of Rampur, in a letter to the editor of the STATESMAN, has said that the local administration has no knowledge of a flow of Pakistani ammunition into Rampur. The district magistrate also said that the statement attributed to him in this connection was incorrect.

AL-ZULFIQAR ORGANIZATION SHIFTS HEADQUARTERS

GF181543 Karachi DAWN in English 17 May 81 p 1

[From our staff correspondent]

[Text] Peshawar, 16 May--The Al-Zulifiqar Organization has set up its operational headquarters in a hotel in Jalalabad--only 46 miles from the Pakistan-Afghan border. Kabul is over 60 miles from the border.

Reliable sources coming from across the border say that Hotel Speenzar has been vacated by certain foreigners and placed at the disposal of Al-Zulfiqar.

Soon after the return of the hijackers of the PIA Boeing to Kabul, 20 Pakistanis were moved from Kabul to this hotel. Certain outhouses and quarters attached to the hotel were also placed at their disposal to be used as stores. Now many more Pakistanis together with their foreign instructors have been housed in this hotel.

BANI-SADR ON POLITICAL SCENE, EXTERNAL PROBLEMS

LD181153 Paris LE MATIN in French 15 May 81 p 14

[Paul Vieille interview with Iranian President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr: "Bani-Sadr's 'Two Wars'"--date and place not given]

[Text] LE MATIN: You seem to be very isolated in Iran. The Islamic Republican Party [IRP], on the other hand, controls almost all the wheels of government. How do you explain that?

Bani-Sadr: It is true that there is now a strong tendency in the country to try to act as in the past and monopolize power. Those who are now trying to monopolize power are trying to establish links with foreign countries to strengthen their power. Indeed, it is not the IRP that I fear. It is not the revolution's real enemy; the danger is what is concealed behind it--all that favors a "restoration."

LE MATIN: Are you saying that you are fighting for freedom? What does that mean to you?

Bani-Sadr: Freedom cannot have the same meaning as it has in your country. In my view it involves keeping the people constantly mobilized. We do not have the same institutions and political organizations you do. If the people are demobilized, authoritarianism, despotism and dependency will quickly reappear. Moreover, all that has not disappeared. Look at the bureaucracy, the police and the army.... Just imagine if the people were not on the alert: Who would prevent them from playing the role they formerly played?

If I had so wished, I could have collaborated with the IRP and suppressed freedom because of the war. I am popular, I am president of the republic, and that is what is done throughout the world in similar circumstances: a state of emergency is decreed. I rejected that solution. I refused to take advantage of this war by suppressing freedom as people are trying to make me do. I am therefore having to wage two wars at the same time--against the foreign enemy, which is trying to stifle our revolution, and against the internal enemy, which is trying to pick up a crown left lying on the ground. During the revolution, when people were asked to explain what an Islamic government meant, they replied that it was the "government of law." But today there is no longer any law. People are arrested and tortured as before. Despite the ridiculous report drafted by the commission set up to investigate this matter, everybody knows that torture takes place. I have more than 500 files on torture cases, photographs and even films. Torture may have lessened after my intervention but it is not certain. So things are the same as before; a man has no rights, he is arrested and eliminated just like you throw away rubbish. At least there was something to hope for before--the prospect of a "great civilization." Today there is not even that.... There is a story going round: Taleqani (an ayatollah who died in the first few months of the revolution) sends a telegram to Imam Khomeyni from Heaven: "I have met the shah but not the revolution's martyrs." It is frightening but significant!

LE MATIN: Isn't Khomeyni worried about this?

Bani-Sadr: Yes, of course, I have written to him and spoken to him about it. The imam acts according to the information he receives and according to his own line of thought. He does not see what I see or have the experience I acquire through action and direct contact with reality. He may even feel that discussing all this will lead the people to despair....

LE MATIN: Don't you fear pressure from the superpowers inside the country?

Bani-Sadr: The Americans think that the essential thing is to keep Iran in a state of dependency on them.

They are taking action in our country by all available means--economic, military, political and even cultural. We were U.S. hostages and still are. For instance, they are doing all they can to prevent the purchase of Iranian oil. We had thought that the Mossadeq era was over and that the West could never prevent a country from exporting oil again. Not at all! They have succeeded in doing so. For instance, Japan and other countries have had to reduce their purchases.

In any case, my political group is the only one which has refused to enter into contact with the Americans. Since the revolution the Americans have constantly tried to show that they still have the key to the situation and that even those who overthrew the shah are trying to maintain contact with them.

As for the Soviets, at present they have little chance in Iran owing to the weakness of the Tudeh (the communist party). Indeed the importance of that organization has constantly been reduced, and it is now completely out of favor.

LE MATIN: Nonetheless, they have very strong strategic positions in the region!

Bani-Sadr: Apparently. The truth is--and this is the most important point--that they enjoyed some popular support before Afghanistan. They have now lost that support.

LE MATIN: Nevertheless, there are people in the dominant party who are favorable to the Soviet Union.

Bani-Sadr: Yes! But that is just a political game and not a conviction. One million Afghan refugees constitute constant counterpropaganda against the USSR.

LE MATIN: You believe that they are prepared to accept your desire for independence at any price?

Bani-Sadr: I discussed that with the Soviet ambassador a few days ago. He told me: "You cannot both milk your cow and beat it." In other words: You attack and insult us and then ask us for milk. I replied: "There are cows who seem prepared to give milk, but when you approach they kick you instead of giving milk." He laughed and said: "Yes, some cows are very strong." I added: "Well, we are afraid of that very strong cow! Plainly speaking, we want to pursue a policy based on this principle: not giving preference to you or the Americans!" He replied that he understood, but that did not prevent collaboration. I said that it was possible.

Moreover that is also what I am seeking with Europe. But not a Europe which is dependent on the United States. A different Europe. We are determined to place our bets on independent countries.

CEREMONY HELD ON BIRTHDAY OF FIRST SHI'ITE LEADER

LD181346 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] According to the Central News Bureau, a ceremony marking the birthday of the lord of the pious, His Excellency 'Ali [first Shi'ite imam], may peace be upon him, was held last night, attended by Minister of State for Executive Affairs Nabavi; Sa'd Mudbir, the secretary of the Libyan People's Bureau in Iran; Ibrahim al-Yunis, the Syrian ambassador; and Abdelkarim Ghraieb, the Algerian ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran, at Imam Hasan Mojtaba Mosque in Naziabad, Tehran.

According to the report, the representatives of fronts and organizations for the liberation of Palestine, Eritrea, Moro, (?Fatani), Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, Bahrain and the Arabian Peninsula alsd attended the ceremonies.

During the ceremonies, Mr Sa'd Mudbir read a message, in Arabic, from the people of Syria, Libya and the PLO. At the end of the ceremonies, which lasted until midnight, Mr Behzad Nabavi made a speech.

While expressing happiness and congratulations on the birthday of the lord of the pious, Nabavi said: In addition to Iraq's attack on Iran and that of the occupying regime of Jerusalem on Syria, we have learned that plans have been prepared for Egypt to attack Syria and Morocco to attack Algeria.

While recounting the problems facing the government, the minister of state said: Those who make an issue of the $56 million are themselves involved in the embezzlement.

In connection with the issue of the former U.S. hostages, he said: Those who were against hostage taking from the start confronted us in such a manner as if they had themselves occupied the espionage den. They even wanted to pretend that the United States of America itself had occupied the espionage den.

At the end of the ceremonies, in reply to a question by a Central News Bureau correspondent on government reaction to the groups who created the Dowletu Prison catastrophe and the mercenary Iraqi Army, Mr Nabavi said: We have utilized all military power in confronting these groups and the agressive Iraqi Army.

Another questioner asked: Considering the limited range of internal mass media and the infamous nature of foreign media, what decisions have you taken to redress this imbalance in the world? Mr Navabi said: There is no need for it to be redressed; they should know that they are under no circumstances affiliated with the superpowers; they themselves know.

RAFSANJANI MEETS WITH OUTGOING UAE AMBASSADOR

GF170541 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 17 May 81

[Text] Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani met with the UAE ambassador in the Majlis building yesterday afternoon. This meeting came at the end of the UAE ambassador's mission in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The UAE ambassador said: The shah used to deal with the Gulf countries as if he were their guardian. The Islamic revolution came to liberate the Iranian people. It abolished the concept of mandates and guardianship. The UAE people, particularly President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, respect the strong Iran that has moved from the Zionist entity's front to the front opposing it. It has moved from the side of the infidels to that of Islam.

The UAE ambassador said: During the economic blockade against Iran, this country placed all its ports and facilities at the disposal of the Iranian Government, and ships carried goods to Iranian ports.

The UAE ambassador described the current war that Iraq has imposed on Iran as ominous and said Islam and Muslims are suffering great losses because of it. He added: The UAE is neutral in this war and is remaining neutral despite the pressure that is being exerted upon us.

Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani replied: We are satisfied with most of the attitudes you have adopted since the revolution. Our brothers have met with President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan and have listened to him. They have acquainted themselves with your theoretical and practical stand. We hope we will be able to live in peace and reconciliation in the future through the inspiration of Islamic teachings and under Islam's banner.

The Majlis speaker said in conclusion: In my capacity as a responsible official of the Islamic Republic, I announce to the Muslim Arab brothers that Iran does not want to exert any pressure on its neighbors. We only want to remove injustice and redress wrongs.

[Tehran PARS in English at 0755 GMT on 17 May carries a similar report on the Majlis speaker's meeting with the outgoing UAE ambassador and identifies the envoy as 'Isa Khalfan al-Huraymil.]

IRAQI MUJAHIDIN REPORT RECENT MILITARY ACTIVITIES

GF180449 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 18 May 81

[Text] Iraqi mujahidin have announced that they are responsible for blowing up the railway line near (Al-Hinnah) city in Iraq. This action disrupted traffic for 1 day. The mujahidin planted bombs on the line and blew it up.

Another group of Iraqi mujahidin stormed the office of an Iraqi security official and killed him.

The mujahidin have also announced that a clash took place between a group of military personnel--who wanted to desert their camp with all their arms--and agents of the Iraqi regime, who ran after them. A clash occurred in which a large number of the agents were killed or wounded and three of the mujahidin were martyred.

REUTER REPORTS EXPLOSION OF KHUZESTAN PIPELINES

WA191200 London REUTER in English 0752 GMT 19 May 81

[Text] Tehran, May 19, REUTER--A massive explosion ripped through six parallel oil and natural gas pipelines in the southeast corner of Iran's oil-producing province of Khuzestan last night, the SOBH-E AZADEGAN newspaper said today.

It said the cause of the explosion was unknown but quoted local security officials as saying it could have been caused by a time bomb.

Four pipeline workers were taken to a hospital after the explosion, which occurred shortly before midnight near the port city of Bandar-e Mahshahr.

Khuzestan is the home of Iran's million-strong Arab minority and has been the scene of sporadic bombings and sabotage of oil installations--usually blamed by the Tehran government on Iraqi-backed Arab separatists.

JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE 506 ON 17 MAY FIGHTING

LD181800 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 81

[Communique 506 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. The heroic fighters of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, inspired by Almighty God and the Lord of eternity, engage with an iron will and steadfast resolve in self-sacrifice and devotion in their incessant battles against the enemies in order to achieve the final victory. We bring to your notice some of their operations on various battlefronts in the past 24 hours.

A. Western fronts:

At 0400 yesterday the fighters of the ground forces in an offensive operation succeeded in smashing the Iraqi forces on one of the fronts in Sar-e Pol-e Zahab and in destroying tanks, two personnel carriers, one trailer and two ammunition trucks of the enemy. In these operations, approximately 20 of the Iraqi forces were killed and 50 were wounded. On other western fronts some sporadic exchanges of fire continued.

Yesterday 80 members of the illegal armed Rastegari group surrendered with their arms to the fighters of Marivan garrison.

B. Southern fronts:

Yesterday exchange of artillery and heavy-weapons fire continued. As a result of the self-sacrificing fighters of the armed forces' fire, a number of enemy tanks, one personnel carrier, one vehicle and two ammunition depots were destroyed and some of their personnel were killed or wounded. In addition, one armored column of the enemy, which was trying to penetrate the positions of our forces, came under the intense artillery and mortar fire of the fighters of the ground forces and their advances were halted.

The self-sacrificing fighters of the navy in Khuninshahr brought the occupied part of Khuninshahr under fire and destroyed two observation posts and two enemy assembly points.

Yesterday various parts of the city of Abadan came under enemy artillery and long-range weapons fire; in addition to causing damage to a number of residential areas and some installations, it also resulted in some casualties.

In the Karkheh region, the fighters of the ground forces opened fire on enemy positions and destroyed three tanks, five foxholes and one Iraqi antiaircraft position. In this clash, more than 50 of the Iraqi forces were killed or wounded.

On the Ahvaz front, as a result of our forces' artillery and heavy weapons fire, two tanks and two vehicles of the enemy were destroyed, and one gas tanker and one ammunition depot were set on fire and destroyed. The number of enemy losses in these operations is reported to be 40 killed.

At 1840 yesterday the positions of the enemy forces west of Karun came under fire from the self-sacrificing fighters of the ground forces, and a number of the enemy forces were wounded.

The high-flying heroes of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran bombed Iraqi positions and assembly points on the Khuninshahr front, inflicting considerable damage and losses on them.

Yesterday one violating plane of the Iraqi forces, which was trying to attack one of the southern cities, was forced to flee from the antiaircraft fire of the forces stationed in the area.

Just as in the past, the heroic and self-sacrificing members of the Gendarmerie of the Islamic Republic of Iran have not refrained from any dangerous mission to safeguard genuine Islam and the greatness and independence of the Islamic homeland; this time they chased armed assailants in the (Kuhe-Sepid) region between Saravan and Khash. In an unequal clash, 32 of the self-sacrificing forces and 1 civilian sacrificed their pure blood and were martyred. The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its congratulations and condolences on the martyrdom of these ever-living fighters to the imam of the nation, their honorable families and the heroic nation and sends its greetings to their pure souls.

[Signed] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

FURTHER DETAILS ON 16 MAY ABADAN BATTLE REPORTED

LD161406 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 16 May 81

[Text] PARS reports that the brave combatants of Islam early this morning launched a heroic attack and smashed the enemy defense line near Abadan by capturing the hills overlooking Abadan's firing range. During these clashes, at least 1 infantry battalion of the mercenary enemy's forces was routed and around 150 of Saddam at-Tikriti's invading forces were taken prisoner by the forces of Islam.

According to this report, the Abadan-Mahshahr highway is now held by the defenders of the Islamic revolution after 217 days of enemy control. Only a few personnel of the forces of blasphemy are continuing their last-ditch resistance efforts.

The PARS report adds: At midnight last night our self-sacrificing combatants, including our brothers in the armed forces, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, the Fedai'yan-e Eslam, the mobilization of the oppressed, the Fedai'yan-e Imam, the Islamic revolution committees, the 14-man committees and other combative forces, launched an attack with extraordinary coordination on the positions of the infidels on the firing range of Abadan. With the support of the artillery units of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, our forces recaptured two strategic observation hills overlooking the firing range after 2 hours of hand-to-hand fighting. Despite the enemy's sophisticated equipment, our forces also overran several positions of the invading infidels.

According to this report, several of the Iraqi prisoners were wounded and are undergoing treatment. During last night's clashes, several defenders of the Islamic revolution were killed or wounded; the exact number of casualties will be reported later.

The report adds: Abadan experienced some very anxious moments last night. During the night the enemy opened a long-range artillery barrage on residential areas of the city of an unprecedented and savage nature. Some damage was caused to houses.

We remind our listeners that Saddam's mercenary armed forces on 11 October 1980 sent their aggressive forces west of the Karun River, in a region between the village of Mared and Haffar-e Khavari, to begin the siege of Abadan. The enemy did this by encircling Khuninshahr and by moving toward (Ossareh) and Haffar-e Bakhtiari via the Ahvaz-Khuninshahr highway. Following these movements, the Iraqi mercenary forces entered the village of Mared, 17 km northwest of the island of Abadan, by constructing a pontoon bridge across the Karun River between northwestern Abadan and eastern Khuninshahr. The enemy then took control of the southern section of the Abadan-Ahvaz highway. At this location the agent Saddam's soldiers arrested a group of deprived inhabitants of the village of Mared and the defenseless people who were trying to leave Abadan along the Abadan-Ahvaz highway. They later martyred the prisoners. The enemy forces then continued their advance and, after occupying the Abadan-Manshahr T-junction and the firing range, entered the Zolfiqari region by constructing a pontoon bridge across the Bahmanshir River, northeast of Abadan. At this point the enemy was confronted with surprising resistance by the combatants of Islam, who killed 170 enemy soldiers and captured 100 more and destroyed much of their battle equipment. Following this ignominious defeat, the enemy forces retreated from the Zolfiqari region toward the firing range and the axis of the Abadan-Mahshahr highway.

In the firing range, Iraqi mercenaries occupied an area of 5 square km and three hills overlooking the area. The Iraqi infidels consolidated their positions and continued to hit Abadan's residential districts and industrial facilities with artillery fire.

On the basis of the latest report, which was received at 1200, clashes are continuing between the forces of Islam and the remnants of the disintegrating forces of blasphemy on the Abadan firing range.

PARS reported at 1224 today that during last night's clashes between the forces of Islam and Saddam's mercenaries in the Abadan region, which resulted in the destruction of the enemy's defense line around Abadan and the occupation of several hills overlooking Abadan's firing range by our forces, eight tanks belonging to infidel Saddam's misled forces were destroyed and seven tanks were seized.

COMMANDER DENIES ABADAN-MAHSHAHR ROAD REOPENED

LD171550 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 May 81

[Telephone interview with unidentified commander of the revolution guards corps in Abadan conducted by Central News Bureau correspondent on 17 May--recorded]

[Excerpt] [Question] In view of the capturing of the Abadan heights, a number of our dear compatriots have asked if the Abadan-Mahshahr road has been reopened or not, and if not, if it is possible that this road will be reopened soon?

[Answer] The media report about the reopening of the Abadan-Mahshahr road is incorrect. The two hills around Abadan have no connection with the Abadan-Mahshahr road. The road is still controlled by Iraqi forces. God willing, with the reinforcement of our forces and with the help of God Almighty, we will recapture the road in future operations. I repeat: These hills have no connection with the Abadan-Mahshahr road.

GUARDS CORPS COMMUNIQUE ON FIGHTING IN SOUTH, WEST

LD162055 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 May 81

[Communique issued on 16 May by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps]

[Excerpts] In His exalted name. In connection with the operations launched by the Islamic self-sacrificing forces over the past two days, we announce the following for the information of our compatriots:

A. Southern fronts:

1. Following a series of operations named Martyr Sheykh Fazlollah Nuri, launched at 2030 last night, two strategic hills separating Abadan's Station No 7 and the Zolfiqari front were recaptured by our heroes. The two hills were then named after our martyr brother, Reza Mo'azami. The latest figures on the losses and casualties suffered by the infidel forces are: 85 killed or wounded and 70 troops captured. Moreover, 15 tanks and 5 enemy armored personnel carriers were totally destroyed and 2 personnel carriers were captured by our brothers. Furthermore, a considerable quantity of light and heavy weapons, as well as mortar launchers and ammunition, were captured by our forces. Five large enemy munition depots were destroyed by our combatants; the sound of their explosions could be heard hours after the shelling.

2. Dezful: Following a series of successful operations by our brothers on one of Dezful's fronts, one enemy [word indistinct] was smashed to pieces and a number of enemy troops were killed or captured.

3. On the Reqabiyeh front, following heavy shelling by Islamic forces, a number of observation posts and heavy and light weapons of Saddam's troops were destroyed.

Our brothers also succeeded in smashing one 60-mm mortar launcher emplacement and killing seven of Saddam's mercenaries.

B. Western fronts:

1. Kermanshah region: Heavy losses were inflicted on two Iraqi posts in (Tawilah) in Iraq after shelling by our forces. Moreover, following pinpoint shelling by the Islamic army's artillery and the cooperation of the revolution guards corps, two vehicles and one 106-mm gun were totally destroyed.

2. On 14 May two villages, [names indistinct], between Sanandaj and Kamiaran, were cleared of the counterrevolutionaries.

3. Marivan area: In Quch Soltan, in Marivan, 15 Iraqi mercenaries were killed and a number of others were wounded after our shellings. The enemy is also reported to have suffered 130 killed or wounded during the clashes which took place between 10-15 May.

4. During a series of operations which took place last night near Saqqez, an armed group belonging to the defunct Kurdish Democratic Party suffered casualties and material losses following its confrontation with the revolution guards corps, the army and the gendarmerie. They subsequently fled. This group was planning to lay an ambush, take hostages and resort to banditry.

17 May Report

LD172210 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 17 May 81

[Summary] The Public Relations Office of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps has announced some of the operations of the guards corps during the past 48 hours.

A. On western fronts: On the Marivan front, two enemy vehicles and three mortars were destroyed. During these operations eight of Saddam's soldiers were killed. Also, as a result of mortar fire by the revolution guards and the Kurdish peshmerga directed at (Bandur) fort, where one of the mercenary groups was positioned, a number of the assailants were killed or wounded. Two mines were discovered on the Kanizan road and one mine was discovered on the road leading to (Dejli) village near Marivan. The mines were defused.

B. On southern fronts: On Abadan fronts, three Iraqi soldiers were killed and an enemy jeep and an artillery piece were destroyed. In Station No 7 in Abadan, one large enemy ammunition depot was set on fire and the sound of explosions could be heard for many hours. Yesterday, in the occupied area in Khuninshahr, one enemy loader was destroyed.

TWO KILLED IN IRAQI AIR RAID ON NOWDESHEH

LD181126 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 May 81

[Excerpt] In line with their sinister and un-Islamic attempts, the Iraqi regime's puppet mercenaries carried out an air raid and bombed Muslim residential areas in Nowdesheh. We now draw your attention to our correspondents' report.

The Public Relations Office of the revolution guards corps headquarters in the western part of the country reported to the Kermanshah Central News Bureau that the Muslim Iranian people's memory of the martyrdom of their brothers in the Sar Dasht prison is still fresh in their mind.

This martyrdom was brought about by Russian MiG's and the collaboration of Qasemlu [Kurdish Democratic Party leader] when once again the bloody hands of the Eastern and Western superpowers emerged from the sleeve of the infidel Saddam. As a result, the Muslim area in Nowdesheh was bombed at 0730 this morning, resulting in the martyrdom of two people and the wounding of seven others. Those martyred are a [word indistinct] and a 4-month-old baby.

PAVEH GOVERNOR INTERVIEWED ON FIGHTING IN REGION

LD151144 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 May 81

[Text] The combatants fighting the cause of right against wrong continue their ruthless battle against the mercenaries of the Iraqi regime's army on the country's western fronts. In an interview with the Central News Bureau's correspondent in Kermanshah today, the governor of Paveh said:

Yesterday, owing to the heroism of our brother guards and complete artillery support from the Ground Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran the Owraman heights were captured by our forces. During these operations, two enemy vehicles, one 106-mm rifle and two Iraqi posts in the vicinity of the Iraqi city of Tawilah were uttterly destroyed. He added: Yesterday, the defenders of the Islamic Republic of Iran totally destroyed with intense fire a post belonging to the mercenary Rastegari mercenaries in (Kuh Takht). (?On the other hand), the democratic party and the Rastegari rabble, enjoying artillery support from the mercenary Iraqi Army, attacked Nowdesheh's residential areas from 1400 to 1800, but the combatants, with their retaliatory fire, forced them to flee. During these operations, two of our Muslim brothers and one of the refugees from Nowdesheh were wounded.

Paveh's governor described the morale of the self-sacrificing combatants of Islam as excellent, saying: The area which has been occupied by the forces of Islam is covered with snow, but despite the bitter cold our forces are vigilantly and carefully watching any moves by the enemy.

At the conclusion of this interview he added: On the heights yesterday as we looked through field glasses we could see the Iraqi city of Tawilah and several posts of the Iraqi mercenaries. We could have razed that city to the ground, but because of the Islamic nature of our revolution we refrain from such action. This is a great lesson for the duped servicemen of the Iraqi Army who attack our defenseless cities.

KURDISH RADIO: REGIME LYING ABOUT PRISON ATTACK

JN171552 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Surani-Kurdish 1230 GMT 17 May 81

[Text] Maragheh--After the abhorrent crime of the Iraqi regime's strafing the prison of Dowlatu when 42 detainees were killed and 6 Kurdish Democratic Party peshmerga were martyred, the reactionary antipeople Iranian Government, which seeks an opportunity for propaganda against the Kurdish people in order to hide the truth from the Iranian people and to come closer to Iraq, as usual grasped this incident to publish lies and fabrications in the newspapers.

We have revealed the names of 32 of the detainees who were killed in the incident, but the Iranian regime said that 120 detainees were killed. Obviously, the regime is exploiting this to cover for the number of the Iranians who were killed in the Khuzestan battle.

We tell the people of Maragheh that no one of their town was killed while the Iranian Government shamelessly says that 15 detainees from Maragheh were killed in the prison. The regime sent the bodies of 15 dead guards killed in Khuzestan and put them with those who were killed in other cities in order to cover their crimes in Maragheh and in other Iranian cities.